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TENNESSEE DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE ISSUES NEW MEASURES FOR DICAMBA

NASHVILLE — The Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) is taking measures to mitigate the risk of drift of herbicides containing dicamba.

In accordance with new rules filed with the Secretary of State:

- Anyone applying dicamba products must be certified as a private applicator or licensed as a pest control operator in the category of Agricultural Pest Control (AGE), and is required to keep records for such applications.
- The use of older formulations of dicamba products for the remainder of this agricultural growing season is prohibited.
- To minimize the potential for off-target movement of the product due to temperature inversion, dicamba may only be applied from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the respective time zone for the location of application.
- Applying dicamba over the top of cotton after first bloom is prohibited.

This action is in response to primarily farmer to farmer complaints currently under investigation by TDA of suspected dicamba related damage on cropland. These measures are based on the recommendations of UT Extension and only apply to dicamba products purchased and used for agricultural purposes. The rules are effective immediately through Oct. 1.

"Our approach will offer protection to those who stand to be negatively impacted by off-target movement of dicamba while also allowing those farmers who have invested in products designed for their crops to continue to use the appropriate herbicides responsibly," Agriculture Commissioner Jai Templeton said.

Dicamba is a broad-spectrum herbicide. Products containing dicamba have been used for household and commercial weed control for decades.

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TDA is working to ensure an appropriate and scientifically-grounded response to an increase in complaints of possible dicamba drift. The department has focused staffing and resources to respond to those complaints quickly and efficiently. Furthermore, the department is engaged in daily discussions with producers, the University of Tennessee, manufacturers, other state and federal agencies and ag industry representatives to address this issue.

“Agriculture today is dependent more than ever on new and evolving technologies to help us feed and clothe the world. I’m confident that we can address this issue as we have in other cases to ensure the safe and effective use of these tools,” Templeton said. “We will be forming an advisory group representative of stakeholders to help us determine the best path forward going into the next year.”

State and federal laws mandate applicators strictly follow label directions and consider the weather and potential for temperature inversions when applying any herbicide. Any suspected misapplication should be reported immediately to TDA at 800-628-2631 or 615-837-5148. The department will take appropriate enforcement action for any misapplication, including but not limited to suspension or revocation of a certificate and state penalties up to \$1,500 per violation, in addition to federal penalties and possible criminal prosecution.

To assist producers and others who have questions, TDA has developed a dicamba resources webpage with links to educational information, a complete listing of approved dicamba products and the new rules at <http://www.tn.gov/agriculture/article/ag-businesses-dicamba-resources>.

The Consumer and Industry Services Division (CIS) of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture monitors a diverse range of materials, products and services to assure quality, consumer protection, public safety and a fair marketplace.

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